was pressed on from week to week it ceased to be a surprise and achieved nothing for the assailants.

(h) The Battle of the Somme.

The main Battle of the Somme was a perfect illustration of a prolonged effort to inform the enemy beforehand and in

No surprise

^me of our intentions — the roads crowded for weeks with columns of marching troops and with heavy guns drawn by caterpillars and huge lorries ; the sky throbbing with observing aeroplanes ; large numbers of captive balloons floating in the air along the exact line of attack. It was all like an old Chancery suit, where the most detailed pleadings informed the defendant to the minutest particular of every point that would have to be met and fought out. It conduced to protracted and costly litigation which deferred final decision until both sides were utterly ruined. Our great Generals would have made excellent special pleaders in the days of Jarndyce *v.* Jarndyce. This kind of procedure suited the man in possession. In this case the man in possession of the disputed ground was the German, These elaborate preliminary warnings therefore suited him.

The British attack was supported with colossal artillery preparation — the heaviest that had ever been launched — and it was carried out by the finest flower of our volunteer army. But it was

in no way a surprise attack. The enemy were well posted as to how, when, and where the attack was coming. Forewarned, they were forearmed. The result was that such gains as we achieved at the price of ghastly casualty lists during the opening days of the conflict were quite insignificant.

But there was one surprise feature about the